

Remarks/Arguments

Claims 2, 4-13 and 15 are pending in the application. By this amendment, claim 15 has been canceled, new claim 17 has been added, and claims 2 and 4 have been amended.

Applicants believe the amendments made herein add no new matter. Any amendments to the claims which have been made in this amendment, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based on prior art, should be considered to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to be attached thereto. Reconsideration and reexamination of the application is respectfully requested in view of the amendments and the following remarks.

Interview Summary

Applicants' Representative thanks the Examiner for the courtesy of an interview on January 6, 2011, where proposed claim amendments were discussed with the Examiner in view of the cited prior art. While no agreement was reached regarding patentability of the proposed claim, it was agreed that the proposed claim amendments would overcome the current European Patent Application No. 1096051 (EP '051) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,568,017 to Cheo rejection.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 2, 4-6 and 15 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over European Patent Application No. 1096051 (EP '051) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,568,017 to Cheo. The rejection is traversed.

Claim 15 has been canceled; therefore, the rejection with respect to this claim is moot. However, the rejection will be addressed with respect to new claim 17.

Based on the interview, it is believed that new claim 17 defines over the EP '051 reference in view of Cheo '017. Therefore, it is believed that no further argument is warranted. Applicant requests withdrawal of the rejection, and assert that claim 17 is allowable over the prior art.

Claims 2 and 4-6 ultimately depend from independent claim 17. In light of the allowability of independent claim 17, the rejection of claims 2 and 4-6 is moot in light of their

dependency on an allowable base claim. Applicants request withdrawal of the rejection, and the allowance of claims 2 and 4-6.

Claim 8 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over EP '051 in view of Cheo '017 and further in view of EP1156318 (EP '318). The rejection is traversed.

Claim 8 ultimately depends from independent claim 17. In light of the allowability of independent claim 17 and because independent claim 17 was not rejected as being obvious over EP '051 in view of Cheo '017 and further in view of EP '318, the rejection of claim 8 is moot.

Applicants request withdrawal of the rejection, and the allowance of claim 8.

Claims 7, 9, and 11-13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over EP '051 in view of Cheo '017 and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,691,536 to Severns. The rejection is traversed.

Claims 7, 9, and 11-13 ultimately depend from independent claim 17. In light of the allowability of independent claim 17 and because independent claim 17 was not rejected as being obvious over EP '051 in view of Cheo '017 and further in view of Severns '536, the rejection of claims 7, 9, and 11-13 is moot. Applicants request withdrawal of the rejection, and the allowance of claims 7, 9, and 11-13.

Claim 10 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as allegedly unpatentable over EP '051 in view of Cheo '017 in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,691,536 to Severns and further in view of DE19821148 (DE '148). The rejection is traversed.

Claim 10 depends from independent claim 17. In light of the allowability of independent claim 17 and because independent claim 17 was not rejected as being obvious over EP '051 in view of Cheo '017 in view of Severns '536 and further in view of DE '148, the rejection of claim 10 is moot. Applicants request withdrawal of the rejection, and the allowance of claim 10.

Conclusion

Applicants submit that all of the claims remaining in the application are allowable over the prior art of record. Nevertheless, Applicants are filing a Request for Continued Examination contemporaneously herewith pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.114. Prompt notification of allowability is respectfully requested.

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Examiner: Jason Mark Heckert
Group Art Unit: 1711

If there are any outstanding issues that the Examiner feels may be resolved by way of telephone conference, the Examiner is cordially invited to contact the undersigned to resolve these issues.

Respectfully submitted,

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